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HYPERMEDIA INFORMATION SYSTEMS FOR THE CITY OF EAST ST. LOUIS' OLIVETTE PARK NEIGHBORHOOD

The Problem

The University of Illinois Departments of Urban Planning, Architecture and Landscape Architecture have been involved in a partnership with the city of East St. Louis for a number of years. They regularly conduct planning and design classes in which students survey neighbor-hoods for census data, site and building condition, employment opportunities, etc., and prepare comprehensive neighborhood plans, documenting their recommendations in a final report. To date, planning and design projects have been completed in four neighborhoods, but no visible change has resulted in spite of their hard work. This is due in part to the fact that the information obtained and developed has not been put into a useful format, been updated with changing neighborhood conditions, and most importantly, has not remained under resident control.

The Technology

The same tools the U.S. Army Construction Engineering Research Laboratories (CERL) is using to access and manipulate digital imagery, video, sound and textual data to aid U.S. Army installation planners in the preparation of the Installation Design Guide (IDG) have been applied to civilian community planning. This technology transfer has provided a "user friendly" means for

community residents, local governmental agencies, and planners to access and manipulate the data necessary to create and implement a viable community plan. The desktop hypermedia work-station utilizes a Power Macintosh 8100AV. The 8100AV offers compatibility with MS-DOS and Windows hardware and software and expandability through additional slots. The primary software package and means to access community data in a "hypermedia environment" is SuperCard 2.5. Other "helper" applications are: Adobe Premiere, SoundEdit 16, Adobe Photoshop 3.0, WordPerfect 3.1, and ClarisDraw.

Benefits/Savings

Hypermedia technology tools provide neighborhood residents, planners and decision-makers with a flexible, low-cost tool that allows efficient access to data needed for the development and presentation of a viable community future development plan. Data may be stored in its original form, whether that is text, photographs, video or sound. These tools can be further used as training aids and as a development system for the creation of a community urban plan. Archival data and plans/presentation material are easily updated as neighborhoods change.

Status

CERL assembled a prototype desktop hypermedia work-station as it might be seen at a neighborhood organization, but is also compatible with the university's computer capabilities. It is also compatible with the work-station already fielded at Fort A. P. Hill for their hypermedia-based master planning Automated Installation Design Guide (AutoIDG).

A skeletal framework for the desktop hypermedia system has been developed for the Olivette Park Neighborhood of East St. Louis, based on data collected by university students. Information obtained includes text, photographs, video and voice interviews. Data sets encompass areas such as census, property description and ownership, building condition and land use, and site condition, as well as recorded interviews conducted with local institutional leaders and neighborhood residents.

University of Illinois personnel have been trained to operate the Olivette Park Neighborhood multimedia planning system. Training included programming using the hypermedia authoring software, SuperCard; manipulating the hypermedia system to reflect changing needs; adding windows for new sets of data as needed; and entering collected survey, photographic, video or voice data. No further work is being done on this project at this time, however, further exploration of alternative media and software to expand hyper media technology capabilities is desired. This exploration might include work with ArcView and developing multimedia displays for access via the World Wide Web.

In addition to CERL and the University of Illinois, this project offers the potential for partnering with the Illinois Community College system, state and local government, private industry, and many community members.

Points of Contact

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